

157 J O B's Appeal.

BEING 1 + 6

A Funeral Discourse

Delivered at

NORTHONNAM in York-shire,

Upon Occasion of the Death of

Mr. JONATHAN DENTON,

WHEREIN

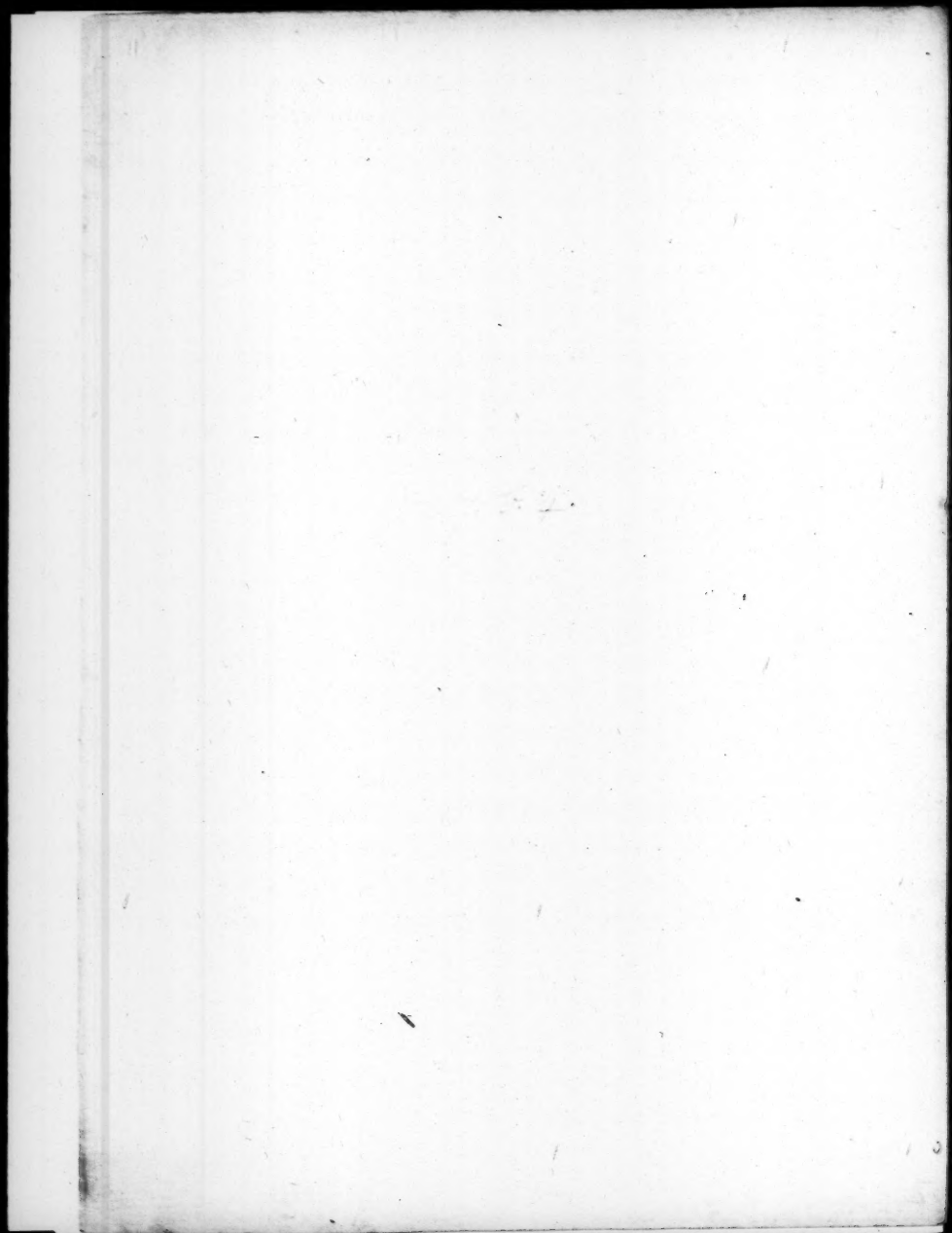
A Christian's State is stated before
GOD, and his Sufferings from the Hand
of GOD cleared.

Grounded upon J O B x. 7.

By OLIVER HEYWOOD, Minister of the Gospel.

L O N D O N,

Printed for B. Aylmer, at the Three Pigeons over against
the Royal Exchange in Cornhill, 1695.



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To His Worthy Friend,
Mr. John Denton,
In Southwark, near London.

Dear Friend,

THE Conception and Birth of these Two Sermons was short and sudden, as the Tydings of the Death of your Dear Brother, my Cordial Friend, was surprising to me; and the Transcribing of these Notes an unexpected Motion, managed something preposterously, with a slight Hand, snatch'd from my many other pressing Occasions, and now sent to you, upon the Request of some Relations to you and your dear deceased Brother, by his very weak unworthy Pastor, who had the Knowledge of him, and Inspection over him, many Tears, and can testify to the Comfort of his surviving Friends, that he was a Man of good Understanding, solid Judgment, savory Spirit, and blameless Conversation; of good use in the Society where he was a Member, beloved of all that knew him, and very imitable in his modest, humble, chaste Conversation, in a single Condition; his Contempt of the World, Mortifiedness to Pleasures and Honours, Diligence in both general and particular Calling, studying the Word of God, reading good Books, constant Attendance on Ordinances, writing Sermons, ingenuous asking Cases of Conscience; his Abilities in Prayer, Discourse, seriousness in the practick part of Religion;

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Prov. 10. 7.
Heb. 11. 39.

gion; to which Many will bear their Testimony, and are concerned for the loss of him. These things I write to you, not as informing you, nor flattering him, which cannot at all add to his present Happiness, but to quicken us in our Diligence, and as a Memorial of the Dead that dye in the Lord; for God hath said, The Memory of the Just is blessed, and such as have obtained a good Report thro' Faith, may be presented to surviving Generations, for their imitation, especially since our dead Friend left us Posterity to bear up his Name.

Notwithstanding his even Carriage, yet his Heavenly Father thought fit to exercise him towards the latter end of his days with Severe Afflictions, both in his Body and Spirit: His Body was a meer Skeleton, worn away, decrepit; and tho' he had been very active and agile, yet had much ado to go upon Crutches, thro' a violent Rheumatism seizing his lower parts: His Mind was much disquieted with the sense of his own guiltiness, great unprofitableness under Means of Grace, much Unbelief, Hypocrisie, which oft gave him occasion to call his state into question; so that he told me he had great Fears upon him about his Sincerity, and questioned how matters would prove at last, and Satan set in with his violent Temptations, and GOD also suspended the Light of his Countenance and Sealings of his Spirit; so that he walk'd in darkness for a considerable time: Yet before he dyed, the Lord scattered his Fears, erected his Hopes, and shined upon his Soul with the Beams of his Love, and the Lord carried him off the Stage comfortably, honourably, yea, triumphantly. He slept in the Lord July the Fifth, and was interred at Hallifax July the Eighth, 1695.

The Spiritual Legacies he left were, 1. Advice to his Friends; 2. This Text.

1. He had given several weighty pieces of his Counsel to several of his Friends and Relations formerly; near his End he said to a Young Man that came to visit him, Oh Friend!

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The Epistle Dedicatory.

Friend! now, by the Grace of God I am ready; come Lord Jesus: Oh, be sure you get ready for this dying hour; see to the getting of the Spirit of God, in what you do, you may pump for Expressions and Affections, but see you get the Spirit of God, for where the Spirit is, there is Liberty. *Several things besides he said, but the Distemper going up into his Head, and he not sleeping of a long time, was not so sensible and capable of Discourse as he had been.*

2. *The other Legacy he left was this Text. A Relation of his apprehending danger of his Death, asked him what he would have me to do for him (he having given an hint of his Mind before) he answered, He would desire me to preach a Funeral Sermon out of those words, Job 10. 7, There is none that can deliver out of thine hand. I had notice of it when I was abroad, and at my return preached on Lord's Day, July 14. 1695, on that second part, according to Order, but have prefixed something to it on the former part of the Text, because I knew it was, first, proper to him, secondly, profitable to us all; and wish from my Soul we could all appeal thus sincerely to the Heart-searching God, who then would transmit our afflicted Souls and Bodies out of the hands of Justice into the hands of Mercy.*

There's none of the Servants of God, but they meet with a severe Purgatory in this Life, and pass through Seas of Trouble to the Haven of Rest, which make them Sea-sick, and did not our blessed Pilot secure them, they would split upon dangerous Rocks of Presumption or Despair: sometimes Deep calls to Deep, which imports, (as a learned Expositor observes) 1. Variety or plurality of Evils, and Evil in one kind to an Evil in another; Troubles of Body, Mind, estate, manifold Temptations; without Fightings, without Fears. 2. Conjunction of Evils, one Evil within another; not as in a Channel where Water runs, and lessens in running, but divers Waters meeting, make a vast Flood;

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Psal. 42.

*Dr. Horton,
in loc.*

2 Pet. 1. 6.

2 Cor. 7. 5.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Job 16. 14.

not successively, but breach upon breach, all at once.

Tea, 3. A Connexion or dependance of one Evil upon another; one Calamity invites another, as if God pursued us till he make an end of us, proceeding in Punishments. This was the Conception of this good Man, that had God's Hand on his Body, Soul, as if Earth, Heaven, and Hell conspired to make him every way miserable; Desertions from God, Temptations from Satan; for that cursed Coward sets on God's Children where they are weakest: God orders this for wise and gracious Ends, partly to try our Spirits, exercise Graces, prevent worse Evils, keep us humble, conform us to Christ, teach us to live by Faith, to long for Christ and Heaven, and prepare us for divine Cordials. To be sure, God's great care is to secure the main Stake in his Children; He will not suffer their Souls to miscarry; He would rather his Children should go to Heaven maimed, than go to Hell with all their Limbs; yea, it may be they will march on faster lame, or see Heavenly Things better when bodily blind, or hear God's Voice better when corporally deaf, than otherwise: And our Blessed Saviour saith, It's better want any Member than be damned. Strong Humors must have strong Physick to work them out, but bitter Pills bring sweet Health; and the Almighty God supports, sanctifies, and at last satisfies the afflicted, tempted Soul, that all this was but needful. It was a fine Saying of Luther's concerning Satan, by whom he was so often buffeted, [Esto, Diabolis magnipotens, nunquam erit omnipotens]. The Devil is mighty, never Almighty; he may foil us, but never our Captain; the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah hath conquered the roaring Lyon.

Mat. 5. 29. 30.

We little know what shocks and batteries we may meet with from GOD, Satan, World, our own Conscience: if we be Graceless, Christless, woe to us. How dreadful is the case of a poor Sinner when Death arrests, Conscience accuseth, the Devil roars, Hell gapes, GOD frowns, and Vengeance

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The Epistle Dedicatory.

pursues him, and he hath no Burrough to flee to! he never thought of such a day, never made provision, took no care to get furnish'd for such a Storm, and now, Sinners, shall go into the holes of the rock, and into the caves of the Earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth. How little will Cap and Knee from Men, or many Thousands a Tear, or wallowing in sensual Pleasures, avail in such a day! Beds of Ivory, numerous Attendants, pompous Funerals, rhetorical Panegyricks profit not the tormented Soul of poor Dives in Hell, of whom it may be said as once of Aristotle, [Laudatur ubi non est, Cruciatur ubi est;] "He is Praised where he is not, but Tormented where he is.

Isa. 2. 19, 21.

Oh that the variety of Instances of our Mortality might alarm our Souls to a preparation for that last Encounter, for go we must, ready or unready, when God calls Heaven and Hell are before us; when Breath goes out of our Bodies, our Souls launch into the vast Ocean of Eternity, to be crowned or confounded. No doubt but the worst of Men, from a principle of Self-preservation, would be happy at death; a Balaam will be content to dye the death of the righteous; as 'tis storied of the young Gallant, with his swaggering Companion, when standing by dying Ambrose, seeing his carriage, hearing him sweetly welcome Death, he said to his Companion, Oh, that I might live with thee, and dye with Ambrose! Alas, vain Fools, think to reap Wheat when they sowed Tares, and find a Pearl that laid up Dirt: Men may cheat themselves, but cannot mock GOD; Such as Men sow such shall they reap; without Holiness no man shall see God. Certainly God knows his own, and will not take the wicked by the Hand, to lead them into his glorious Mansions when they have sinned as long as they can, and confronted his glorious Majesty with their Rebellions. Alas, how carelessly do most men live, keeping vain company, talking idly, mispending precious Time, neglecting God's Worship in Family,

Numb. 23, 10.

*Gal. 6. 7.
Heb. 12. 14.*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

mily, in Secret, beedless in their dealings with Men, living at large, heed not which end goes forward, wondering at and censuring others for their niceness, zeal, and tenderness, yet hope to go to Heaven as well as the best of them all: Oh, what a disappointment will these wretched Souls meet with, when gracious and industrious Saints are saved with so much difficulty!

1 Pet. 4. 18.

I do humbly tender this short and mean Discourse to you, begging your kind acceptance of it, and profit by it. Use it as you please, so it may answer my Ends: It's full of good will, both as a Testimony of my due resentment of the Memory of my dear deceased Friend, and earnest desires of your Soul's Health and Happiness here and hereafter; for whom, and the rest of Relations, I am bound to continue my poor Prayers, That we may meet before the Throne, cloathed with the Wedding-garment, that fine Linnen, clean and white, which is the Righteousness of the Saints, having the Blessed JESUS to speak for us as our Advocate; to whose Hands I commit You and Yours, whilst I am

Mat. 22. 11.

Rev. 19. 8.

Your Cordial,

Aug. 8.
1695.



Well-wishing Friend,

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JOB X. 7.

Thou knowest that I am not wicked: And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.

THIS Text contains the Sum and Marrow of the grand Controversie betwixt afflicted *Job* and his censuring Friends: They will needs prove *Job* to be a wicked man. The Devil and *Job's* Friends speak the same Language, only Satan presumes upon it, that if God will *touch Job's Flesh*, he will curse him to his Face; ch. 2. 5. His Friends uncharitably accuse him as one that had cursed God, or committed some scandalous Sin, and therefore God did so severely touch his Flesh.

Against this Charge *Job* makes his Appeal to the heart-searching God, and saith, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

The latter part of the Text speaks, 1. A Concession; I may for all my Integrity be in God's Hand; *i. e.* in the correcting Hand of God. 2. An Assertion; *None can deliver out of thine hands*; *q. d.* I may continue long under it, and no power in Heaven and Earth can rescue me, except God himself set me at liberty.

A word of the former, tho' the latter be the Subject assigned to me: [*Thou knowest*] The words are very emphatical in the first Language; *על ידעך* *i. e.* *It is upon thy knowledge that I am not wicked*; *q. d.* Thou hast not this Knowledge from without, *i. e.* from Reports or Hearsay; no, thy Knowledge is from thy self, it's internal, immediate, and therefore perfect and infallible.

Jer. 17. 9
Acts 15. 8, 18.

2 Cor. 5. 10, 11

*Ilave in Rege-
muis peccatum
improbi tamen
dici non possunt
nec debent.
Merc.*

Obj. 1. GOD exactly knows every Man's state and frame: His Knowledge is not consequent but concomitant of his Search; *All things are naked and opened unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do,* Heb. 4. 13. GOD's Line soundeth Man's Depth; himself anatomizeth all our parts, our Persons and Actions are manifest to God now, and shall be laid open before Angels and Men at the great day.

Thou knowest that I am not wicked.] He saith not that I am not a Sinner; alas, there's too much Sin in me, Sin (saith an Interpreter) sticks in the Regenerate, yet they cannot or ought not to be called wicked; God gives the Denomination from the better part: The best Saints are but Sinners, the worst Saints are not wicked; they are indeed Sinners by their remaining Corruption, but godly by receiv'd Renovation.

The word here [*That I am not wicked*] is a Verb, [עָשִׂיתִי לֹא רָע] *quod non impie egerim*; as David, Ps. 18. 21. *And have not wickedly departed from my God*; i. e. in a course of sinning.

The Phrase also imports a being condemned and cast at God's Bar, as a wicked man, Ps. 109. 7. *When he is judged let him be condemned* [*Erat improbus*] let him go forth as a condemned Malefactor. I dare appeal to the All wise Heart-searching God, that I am not such an one.

Doct. 1. That a truly gracious Soul dare Appeal to God, that he is not wicked.

The Child of God makes God Witness of his Integrity; when Enemies scorn, Satan accuseth, Conscience nips, and God himself keeps at a distance, then the devout Soul can say as Job 16. 19. *Also now behold, my witness is in Heaven, and my Record is on high.*

This may seem a Paradox, but it's a great Truth, that the holiest Saint on Earth dare not justify himself before God, yet he dare stand before God to justify his Integrity

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A Funeral SERMON.

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ty. This must be understood in an evangelical sense, not in a legal, thro' Christ the Mediator, not as in himself, according to the Covenant of Grace, not of Works. A great Divine saith, The Gospel-Covenant relaxeth the rigor of the Law, which called for compleat Obedience, by resolving all that into this of Sincerity and Truth. When we go upon the Tryal for our Lives before Christ's Bar, the great Inquest will be, whether we have been sincere or not; he means not that Sincerity is set up in Christ's Room, but as it is evidential of our Interest in him: Hence saith Job, *Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity,* Job 31. 16. He means a Gospel-balance, for *by the works of the law shall no Flesh be justified*; nor doth he mean, that God must weigh him before he know him, but it's spoken after the manner of Men: Hence David saith, *Pf. 139, 23, 24. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me*: There is Sin in me, too much Wickedness in my naughty Heart, God knows, but I dare appeal to thee, that there's no wicked way, or way of Wickedness, *i. e.* no ordinary Road, nor any uninterrupted Path of Sin in me; it doth not make a Thorowfair of my Soul. I give it many a turn, and dare appeal to thee, that I would be gladly rid of it.

All I shall do in this point, is, to propound and answer this weighty Case of Conscience. *Quest.* How may a Christian make it out in his Appeal to God, that he is not wicked? I confess, this is a great Question, and hard to be resolved, but I shall follow the Scripture-line in representing the Good Soul's Case in his Appeal to God.

1. Lord, thou knowest I am not as I have been, there's a great change wrought in my Heart and Life; a turn I have had, thou knowest, whether it be saving or no, whether from the power of Satan to God; but I can say, such a one I was, but I am not I, a new Frame I am put into,

B 2

thou

Journal Ar-
mour, par. 2
p. 88.

Gal. 2. 16.

Acts 26. 18.
1 Cor. 6. 11.

2 Cor. 5. 17.

thou knowest whether it be the new Creature; the Stream of my Affections runs in another Channel, thou knowest whether in the Channel of Grace, and Heavenwards.

Psal. 73. 25.

Isa. 41. 5.

2 Cor. 8. 5.

2. Thou knowest I have made a solemn Covenant with thy self; thou knowest the time, place, manner, inducements, ends, witnesses of this Covenant; I did study the Nature of this Covenant, and felt the Pulse of my Soul, whether I was cordial in it, and I thought I chose thee only to be my chiefest Good and utmost End, and gave up my self entirely to thee, when there was no witness besides God and my own Conscience; thou knowest whether I had any Reserves, Distinctions, Evasions in this solemn Transaction; I have given thee the Keys of my Heart, and am glad of such a Guest and Lord.

Psal. 66. 18.

Psal. 119. 104.

3. Lord, thou knowest *I do not regard Iniquity in my Heart*, I cannot look pleasantly upon it; there is a secret dislike of every Sin, not only as Soul-damning, but as God-dishonouring; I hate every false way, as contrary to the Law of God; yea, methinks I find an Antipathy to it, as contrary to my new Nature; tho' suited to my carnal Palate, yet Grace raiseth my Stomach against it, for the intrinsick Evil in it, as well as Consequence of it, I hate it, tho' delectable, profitable; yea, and *abhor what is evil, even the garment spotted by the Flesh*.

Rom. 11. 9.

Jude 23.

Mat. 6. 13.

Psal. 141. 3, 4.

Gen. 39. 9.

Psal. 17. 3.

Psal. 18. 23.

4. Lord, thou knowest I do daily resolve and pray against Sin, all Sin, of Heart and Life, thy self is privy to my earnest supplications, that I may not be led into Temptation, or left under the power of it; Lord, *set a watch before my mouth, encline not my heart to any evil thing: God forbid I should do this or that wickedness, and sin against God. I am purposed that my mouth (hand, feet) shall not transgress*. God hath heard my Prayer, and known my Vows against this and that particular Lust, to which I was formerly addicted, and hope I can say as David, *I was*

also

also upon *me* before him, and I kept my self from mine iniquity, it prevails not over me.

5. Lord, thou knowest I am daily seeking not only to lop off the Branches, but to stub up the Roots of Sin, to cut off Members that but weaken and mortifie the Body of Death, to crucifie the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts. Alas, it's not enough to cease the Acts, but my Soul would weaken the Habits of Sin: Oh that the Old Man were crucified with Christ, that the body of Sin may be destroyed: The only Conquest is wrought by Christ's Death and Resurrection; I do find it is nothing but the Law of Life in Christ Jesus that must make me free from the law of Sin and Death: he only came to destroy the works of the Devil.

Rom. 6. 3.

Gal. 5. 24.

Rom. 6. 6.

Rom. 8. 2.

1 John 3. 8.

6. Lord, thou knowest I set my self against secret and spiritual Sins; cleanse thou me from secret sins, as well as keep me back from presumptuous sins. I am afraid of Pride, hardness of Heart, lukewarmness, hypocrisy, vanity, formality, and all spiritual as well as fleshly Wickedness. Now I understand by the Holy Law, that the least motions of Sin in my Heart are evil, and deserve Death; thou knowest whether I make not conscience of those Sins, which others make no reckoning of, even vain thoughts, risings of the

Psal. 19. 12, 13.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Rom. 7. 7.

Psal. 119. 113.

7. Lord, thou knowest the Conflicts and Combats between *the flesh* and *the spirit*, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. Methinks I find within me as it were the companies of two Armies; my Corruption is not on the Throne, but in the Field; Sin hath not dominion over me: I am daily warring, and tho' I am oft foiled by it, yet fall on again; it is not a King, but a Tyrant in me; I go daily armed into the Field, and must milite under the Banner of my dear Lord, and shall be Conqueror.

Gal. 5. 17.

Cant. 6. 4.

Rom. 6. 12.

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Psal. 19. 12, 13

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Con-

A Funeral Sermon

Job 1: 28.

Job 7: 24.

Psalm 38: 9

Psalm 68: 19

Job 19: 19

Psalm 25: 4, 5

Psalm 110: 63.

Psalm 138: 3

Job 19: 24.

Psalm 143: 140

Job 12: 23

Psalm 141: 5

Psalm 138: 11

Psalm 7: 7

Conscience, make me weary and heavy laden; I cry, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? Thou knowest the Yearning of my Sin hath cost me; Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee. One Sin hath cost me more than all my other troubles; Oh my broken Bones!

9. Lord, thou knowest I love not the company of wicked men, I bid them oft depart from me, not out of ostentation, but for fear of infection; I would not be found among wicked men when my Lord calls; I am not faine with vain persons; yea, I have hated the congregation of evil doers. I have oft got either Guilt or Grief in a needless associating with them; I hope thou wilt not rank me with the wicked, whom I love not.

10. Lord, thou knowest I have loved the Society of thy Saints and Servants; I am a Companion with them that fear thee, these I account the Excellent in the earth, in whom is all my delight. I am sure wicked Men love not thy Children, and I am sure they are passed from Death to Life that love the brethren of love them, because they are so like thee, my Heavenly Father, bear thine image, though poor in the World, and differ in some things from me, yet my Heart is towards them, and I am conversing with them in Gods Worship and Christian Commerce.

11. Lord, I love to be acquainted with the Holy, and I love them better that are faithful to my Lord, I truly say, I love my Minister better for his Holiness, and the Word of God better for its Purity; Lord, make me to know my Transgressions and my Sins. I love not palting, but would have my wound search'd to the bottom, that it may be safely cured; Let the Lord be true to me, it shall be a kindness; yea, and I shall be true to God, by a solemn reflecting upon my Faults.

12. Lord, thou knowest whether my Soul doth not love thee and Jesus Christ; thou hast said to me,

A Funeral SERMON.

7

These *Christ* is precious, I have oft been feeling the Pulse of my Soul, and at last dare appeal to thee with *Peter*, *Lord, thou knowest that I love thee*; thy self shalt vouch for me, and make my Affidavit: Thou shalt not have this attestation at my hand, but upon thine own knowledge. Thou art the *chiefest of Ten thousand*; yea, doubtless I want all things but loss for the Excellency of the knowledge of *Christ*.

John 4 15.

Cart 5. 8
Phil 3 8

13. Lord, thou knowest what a poor sorry thing I account the World to be in all its Glory and Gayety; alas, the Pleasures, Profits, Honours of the World are a poor Pageantry; I have made *Moses's* choice, to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than the pleasures of sin, Honours and Offices in *Pharaoh's* Court. I can look thro' the best of the World, and can turn my back upon it, as an empty insignificant thing, tho' the Men of the World are content with it for their Portion.

1 Joh. 2. 15, 16

Heb 11 24, 25

14. Lord, thou knowest the way that I take, and the earnest desire and design of my Soul to walk in thy ways, to have respect to all thy Commandments, to attend in all thy Ordinances; I miss it in all, but dare baulk none; my aim is, to fulfil all God's wills, to stand compleat in all the will of God; there's no Flesh-displeasing Duty, no self-denying Act, but I attempt to do it; if God say so it, I will not consult Flesh and Blood, but say, *As thou hast said, so must I do, my Foot standeth in an even place*, lies square, all to God's will, at all times, in all places, conditions.

Job 23 20.

Psal 119 6.
Luke 1 6
Acts 13. 22.
Col. 4 12.

Gal 1 16.
Ezra 10 12.
Psal 26 12.

15. Lord, thou knowest I do my best in every religious Exercise, God forbid that I should offer to the Lord that which costs me nothing; I must love the Lord with all my soul, mind, strength, God forbid that I should do the work of the Lord negligently, or offer to the Lord a corrupt thing. Oh that I could be more fervent in Spirit in serving God. God deserves more, my best is infinitely below him. Oh that I could do more! but alas, I am short in all.

2 Sam 24 24
Mat 22 37.
Jer 48 10
Mal. 1 14.

16. Lord,

1 Cor. 15. 30
1 Pet. 4. 11.
Rom. 14. 8.
Phil. 1. 20

16. Lord, thou knowest my design in all I do is for thy Glory, and the enjoyment of thee; I dare not look at both, then I lose my self in my natural, civil, spiritual Acts, all the Lines must and shall bend this way, that *God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ*; my design is, *to live to the Lord, and to dye to the Lord, that Christ may be magnified in my Body, by life or death*: And Oh that I could enjoy Communion with God in every Duty and Ordinance! thou knowest this is my Heaven.

Cant. 8. 5
1 Cor. 15. 10
2 Cor. 3. 5
Phil. 4. 13
Psal. 119. 32
Rev. 8. 3.

17. Lord, thou knowest all my dependance is upon thy Majesty, both for assistance and acceptance: *I may lean on my beloved: by the Grace of God I am what I am*. I cannot think a good thought without fresh Supplies of Grace: but *I am able to do all things through the strength of Christ*: I shall run the ways of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart: and I lay all upon thy golden Altar to be accepted in the Beloved.

Phil. 3. 14
2 Cor. 7. 1
Col. 2. 19.
Eph. 4. 15.

18. Lord, thou knowest I am daily pressing towards Perfection, I have not yet attained what I would fain be at: I would be mending what's amiss, soaring up to an higher pitch in Grace, *perfecting Holiness in the fear of God, encreasing with all the encrease of God till I come to a perfect man*. Alas, how much do I yet want of Perfection? I would still be singing the song of Degrees, *And go from strength to strength, till I appear before God in Zion*.

Psal. 84. 7.
Psal. 137. 6.

19. Lord, thou knowest how much I am concern'd for the Church of God, which gives some grounds to hope I am a lively Member of that mystical Body: *If I forget Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning*. Oh, it raiseth my Heart to see the Gospel propagated, Sinners converted, Saints edified, united: But oh, it runs to my Heart to see Christ's Interest laid low, the preaching of the Gospel obstructed, few Converts, Scandals breaking out, Contentions breaking in: *Wo is me, — the good man is perished out of the earth*: Wickedness abounds, Love decays,

Psal. 119. 136,
158.
Mic. 7. 1, 2, 3.
Phil. 2. 20.

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Decays : [*terras Astrae Reliquis*] I may make that Lamentation, *Isa. 59.*

20. Lord, thou knowest, notwithstanding all this, what a mean account I have of my self and my poor doings [*horo meo quicquid de meo est*]; alas, my doings are but Dregs and Rags; I am still an *unprofitable Servant*; I despair of my self, *I abhor my self in dust and ashes, I will be vile in mine own eyes*: God may justly condemn me, notwithstanding all I have done; yea, for all I have done, if God mark Iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand? I fly to my Advocate Jesus Christ, and desire this New Testament. *Aaron may take away the iniquity of my holy things.*

Luke 17. 10.
Isa. 61. 5.

Job 42 6.

Psal. 130. 3. 4.
Exod 28 38.

I shall subjoin a few words of Application. *First*, for Doctrin. If God's Children thus appeal, then

1. Others do not know their Hearts, for God's Children appeal not to Men as they do to God: No man knows another's Heart, and should not pretend to it; that's a wild groundless Censure, such carry fair, but their Hearts are naught. How knowest thou? Dost thou usurp God's Throne? The best Men have been deceived with others Professions; so the best Church on Earth, with *Simon Magus, Act. 8. 13, 22.* [*De secretis non judicat Ecclesia.*] The Church judgeth of overt Acts, not of secret Thoughts.

2. The most observant Persons have much ado to know their own Hearts, but are glad to appeal to God. The Prophet saith, *Who knows it? i. e. few*: It is a deep fathomless Pit. *Hazael said, Is thy Servant a Dog, that I should do such things?* Peter was confident he should never deny his Master, but both fail'd. *The inward thought of every one, and their heart, is deep*, saith the Psalmist: It gives doubtful and deceitful Answers, like the Heathen Oracles; *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool*, it will certainly deceive him.

Jer. 17 9.

Psal 64 6.

Prov. 28 26.

3. Yet 'tis possible Men may know their spiritual Estate Godwards, else *Job* durst not thus appeal to God: This Expression speaks some confidence in *Job* [*Vox est non dubitantis sed asserentis*]; he doth not doubt, but assert his Integrity;

C

grity;

grity; yea, *Job* saith, *ch. 27. 6. My righteousness I hold fast and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live.* It's possible Men may know whether they be in a state of Grace or no; God hath given Conscience for this End: *The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.* If Men were faithful, and would light their Candle at the Word, and make diligent Search they might know more.

4. The whole World is distributed into two sorts of Persons, good and bad, godly and wicked, pious or prophane. Two Loves, saith *St. Augustin*, built two Cities; the Love of God built *Zion*, and Worldly Love built *Babylon*; the whole Race of Mankind are Inhabitants of these two Cities: And tho' carnal Men will not believe it, but think Men differ rather [*grad* than *specie*] only gradually, some better, others worse, not in kind, yet a time is coming when they shall discern betwixt the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not; when the sheep shall be set on the right hand, and the goats on the left, and receive different Sentences from the Impartial Judge of the World: yea, at this day, as discriminating Grace makes a difference, so discriminating Preaching shews a difference among Men; yea, Ministers must teach People the difference between holy and prophane, as well as divide the Word of God aright; and it is a discernor of the Thoughts and intents of the Heart. So that Men might see a vast difference, if they were not wilfully or judicially blind.

Secondly, Another Use is, of Instruction and Admonition.

1. To all sorts of Persons, to be and behave themselves as such as may make their Appeal to God. Oh, that all Christians could say as the Church of old, *Psal. 44. 17, 21. All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant, &c. Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.* Oh Friends, what side are you of? God knows, it's fit you should know. *I know my sheep.* He needs not that any should testify of man,

Prov. 26. 27.

Mal. 3. 18.

Mat. 25. 34.

Ezek. 44. 23.

2 Tim. 2. 15.

Heb. 4. 12.

John 10. 14.

John 2. 24.

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for he knows what is in man. Look to't, if you be godly, God will own you as his; if not, be sure your sin will find you out. Ask your selves, What am I, a Sheep or a Goat? Whose am I, GOD's Servant, or the Devil's Slave? What am I doing, GOD's Work, or the Devil's Drudgery? Whither am I going; to Heaven or Hell? What say you to the twenty 'foresaid Appeals? Will your Hearts ingenuously eccho to them? If you say, Yes, compare your Hearts and Scripture, and go upon safe grounds; if not, tremble under Divine Wrath and the Sentence of Condemnation: Be distinct in this case, for you must be try'd another day.

Numb. 32. 23

2. If you find that you are wicked, then woe be to you, whether you be openly prophane or secret Hypocrites: *The light of the wicked shall be put out: An Hypocrite shall not come before God: The ungodly shall not stand in Judgment; for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish: The wicked must be silent in darkness; yea, turned into Hell; yea, God is angry with the wicked every day; and He will rain upon them snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: Upon your Doors may be writ a Lord have mercy upon you; God will not own you, nor hear your Prayer, but say to the wicked, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? All you do is sinful, natural, civil Religious acts. The very plowing of the wicked is sin; their Prayer is abomination, yea, their Sacrifice; it will be bitterness in the end. Say to the wicked, It shall be ill with him. Yea, the longer you live, and the more mischief you do, and the more misery you heap up, to fit you for Destruction. Oh, therefore bethink your selves, repent, forsake your way and thoughts, that he may have mercy on you.*

Job 18 3.

Job 13. 16.

Psal. 15. 6.

1 Sam. 2. 9.

Psal. 7. 17.

Psal. 7. 11. &

11. 6, 7.

Psal. 50. 16.

Prov. 21. 4.

Prov. 15. 8.

Isa. 3. 11.

Rom. 25. 9, 22

Isa. 55. 6. 7.

Third Use concerns God's Children, 1st, by way of Comfort; 2^{dly}, Caution.

1st, You that dare, and do thus appeal to God in sincerity, whose Hearts do not upbraid you, thank God for it; this very Appeal is a good Evidence of your Sincerity, and

will fortifie you, 1. Against the Censures of Men: God knows you better than men, and will clear you when men condemn you. How often doth *David* cheer up himself with this? Your Names may lye under a Cloud for a season, but *God will bring forth your righteousness as the light*: Thus did he with holy *Job*. 2. Against *Satan's* fore Temptations; when he accuseth you to God, he will say, *The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan*: He will take away your filthy garments. When *Satan* accuseth you to your selves, and Conscience condemns, *God is greater than your Hearts*, and will supersede all these Pleas. 3. In the hour of sad desertion, when God hides his Face, withdraws his Grace, this will cheer you when you can go to God, and say, *Thou knowest I am not wicked*; let God carry as he pleaseth to me, his Kisses are his own, he doth me no wrong, I will cling to him still, *Though he kill me, I will trust in him*; if he carry strangely to me, yet he is good, worthy to be follow'd in the dark: *I will stay my self on the Lord my God*. 4. In a dying hour this will be a blessed Reflection, when a Soul can say with good *Hezekiah*, under the Sentence of Death, *Isa. 38. 3. Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart*. Oh happy Soul, that can look Death in the Face, and with confidence approach the tremendous Tribunal under the comfortable fence of this Upright and Scriptural Appeal!

Yet take a Caution or two,

1. Take heed of Ostentation, pride not your selves in it, for this is contrary to the nature and ends of this Appeal. *If I justify myself, saith Job, mine own mouth shall condemn me*. Alas, I am far from Perfection; *I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth; yea, I repent in dust and ashes*. 2. The Lord Jesus is to be our only Surety, to answer for us: *where is boasting? It is excluded; By what law? of works? nay, but by the Law of Faith*. The Gospel-language is, *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory, Isa. 45. 25.*

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Thus I have dispatch'd the former part of my Text; I proceed to the latter, *There is none that can deliver out of thine hand.*

What, none! then our condition were sad, as forlorn as the fallen Angels; but none here must refer to meer Creatures, for Jesus Christ can deliver us out of the hands of Justice, *from present wrath, and wrath to come.*

1 Theff. 1. 10

The Hand of God is the Power of God; Deliverance is either temporal, or spiritual, or eternal Deliverance; which way soever it be taken, it will afford this

Doct. *That no means on Earth can rescue a Person out of the Hands of the Infinite God.*

Job 9. 12. *Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, what doest thou?*

In opening this Text and Doctrin, I shall observe this method:

1. Shew the meaning of the Text.
2. In what cases Men are in GOD's Hand.
3. What may most likely deliver Men.
4. Why no Creature can deliver. So make Applications.

1. For the sence and meaning of the words, Interpreters take them in a twofold sence.

First, Some take it as [*vox dolentis*] the Language of Job's Sorrow and Complaint, moving God's Bowels of Compassion: As if Job should say, Lord, why dost thou deal thus severely with me? Who can rescue me when thou arrests me? Thou maist keep me under restraint for ever, and take time enough to punish me; thou needst not set me upon such a grievous wrack, as tho' I were in danger to be rescued, or to escape thy hands, as men will take their penniworths of Malefactors while they have them; so Princes fearing a rescue of the Prisoner, send forth a Writ of Execution to dispatch him: The tormented Prisoner desiring a dispatch out of his Misery by Death, was answer'd by the Tyrant, [*Nondum tecum in gratiam redii*] I am not so far Friends with.

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with thee. It may be this Text is parallel to *Ch. 7.* where *Job* would be glad to be shut out of his Pain; *But*, saith he, *I see I cannot till God's time*; but, *Lord, pity me, smite me not both sharply and long.*

Secondly, Some make it sound as [*vox profitentis*] *Job's* heroick and magnanimous Profession and stout Resolution, to adhere to God and Duty, tho' he were kept under God's Hand all his days; *q. d.* Lord, I have appealed to thee that I am not wicked; and I hope hitherto my Integrity hath appeared, and, by thy Grace assisting me, shall further appear, tho' none should deliver me out of thine Hand; I humbly hope thou shalt find me holding mine Integrity as long as Life; do what thou wilt with me, I will honour thee: I hope to prove the Devil a Liar, who said, *I would curse thee to thy Face*; hitherto he is mistaken, and I hope shall be by the Grace of God assisting me; if I never be deliver'd, God shall not be blasphem'd; I will for ever have good thoughts of God, whatever he do with me. If I cannot be deliver'd or satisfied about God's proceedings, yet God shall be justified.

Both these Sences are proper enough, we may take it in either.

2. What it is to be in God's Hand. *Ans.* God's Hand in Scripture-phrase, implies these ten several things.

1. God's Eternal Purpose and Design, *Acts 4. 28.* *For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done*: This cannot be altered, the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. This is a Truth, but not pertinent here.

2. God's supreme actual Power extended and put forth to do good, *Acts 4. 30.* *By stretching forth thine hand to heal.* And this is true; when God will help and heal, the Devil and his Instruments cannot pluck the Patient out of God's Hand. Nor can this be the proper sence here.

3. By God's Hand, is meant his Provision for his Creatures; *Psal. 104. 28.* *Thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good*: And indeed, none can starve those that God will

Job 2. 5.

Jer. 12. 1.

Psal 33. 11.

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supply, *In the days of famine they shall be satisfied.* Yet this is not the meaning of the Text. Psal. 37. 19.

4. God's disposing ordering Providence is held forth by his Hand, *Psal. 31. 15. My times are in thine hand.* No mortal can lengthen or shorten my days but thy self; *Man's days are determined,* God appoints these Bounds. I think *Job 14. 5.* *Job* means not this directly here.

5. By God's Hand is meant the Divine Assistance, *Psal. 74. 11. Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand?* This is either Protection or Help; *Let thy hand be with the man of thy right hand.* Indeed, none can hinder or weaken, if God strengthen. Yet this is not the sense.

6. By Hand is meant God's special Love and Favour, *Luk. 1. 66. The hand of the Lord is with him, i.e. John Baptist;* some peculiar Indulgence and visible Tokens of God's Respect to him. This is a Mercy, that none can deprive the Saints of. Yet this is not meant.

7. The operation and working of the Holy Spirit, *Ezek. 3. 2. The Hand, i.e. the Spirit of the Lord was there upon him;* *Ch. 2. 2.* And whether this be extraordinary motions or ordinary, there's none can hinder or obstruct these. This is Truth, but not the meaning of this Text.

8. By Hand, is meant any providential Dispensation, whether good or bad; *Job 2. 10. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?* This is only God's Prerogative; *I kill, and I make alive.* This may be included in this Text. Yet it's not all.

9. Yet more particularly, by Hand of God, is meant an Hand of Affliction. So saith *David, Thy hand presseth me sore, Psal. 38. 2.* Be it inward or outward, this I conceive to be the meaning, as *Job* saith, *Have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of the Lord hath touched me.* Job —

10. Or lastly, by Hand of God is meant Death, *Psal. 49. 15. God shall redeem my Soul from the power or hand of the Grave: To God the Lord belong the issues from death.* If God will kill, who is he that can preserve alive, or raise from the Grave? Psal 68. 20.

Deut. 32. 39. Grave? *I kill, saith God, and I make alive, I wound and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.* This last, and the former of Affliction, I conceive are meant by the Hand of God in my Text: and where are Men or Things that can secure us from Death or Trouble? What Power or Policy can prevent or remove by force or cunning, that Hand of God that He thinks good to bring upon us? Suppose God take away Estate, Friends, Relations, Health, Peace, Liberty, or Life, who can forbid him? Where lives that man that can rescue these out of God's Hands? If God stop the Breath, who can hold it? The whole World must yield.

3. The next Head to be handled is, Who or what in Mens Opinion is judged most likely to deliver Persons out of the Hand of God.

1st, Men expect that their Riches, and Honours, and great Friends should deliver them; as that wretched Prelate, that cried out when dying, 'Will Money do nothing? will my Prince's Favour avail nothing? why must I dye, that can command the greatest part of the Kingdom? No, no, *Riches profit not in the day of wrath*; no, nor Treasures; *none of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God ransom for him.* Men are mistaken, if they think to purchase a Reprieve or Exemption from Death or any other Trouble. Here Money bears no mastery, a golden Key will not open God's Prison-door; there's no Bribe admitted in this case that can convey us from the Stroke of Justice: Alas, if God take Men away with his Stroke, *then a great Ransom cannot deliver them.* Will God esteem mens Riches? No, no.

Prov 10. 2.
Psal. 49. 6, 7.
8, 9.

Job 36. 17.
48. 19.

Ecc. 8. 8.

2^{dly}, Some have great confidence in an Arm of Flesh: they think natural Health, Vigor, Fortitude will stand them in stead; but alas, what's become of the most vigorous Spirits and Constitutions? Where is *Xerxes's Army* of a million of Men, with all their fortitude and magnanimity? *No man hath power over the spirit, to retain it: there's no discharge in that war.* The Forces of Strength cannot with

stand

stand Assaults from Heaven, no more than Men can hinder drops of Rain from falling : Where's the doughty Champion that can meet Arms with *Jehovah*? Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered? Are men, yea, all men, stronger than God? When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? So on the contrary, He will recompence, whether men chuse or refuse : There is none that can deliver out of my hand, saith God ; I will work, and who shall let it? All Attempts are in vain to keep off a Cross, be it publick or personal, to Soul or Body.

3dly, Men make great reckoning of Wit, Parts, Learning, or politick Stratagems; Men dig deep to hide their counsels from the Lord, but God disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprize. The learnedst Physicians cannot find out an Antidote against Sickness or Death. If men say, thus we will do, if God say it shall not stand, he tumbles down the Babel of mens Inventions; He saith, Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught. A whole College of Physicians, with all their Art and Learning, cannot cure so much as an *Ague*, which is called [*Ludibrium Medicorum*], bids defiance to the Skill of the most learned; yea, the most contemptible Disease shall be the Door to let in Death, if God open the Door, for he alone keeps the Key: And so in all other cases the great God can and oft doth knock the Pates of the wisest Politicians together, and maketh their Counsels of none effect; for there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord. *Cæsar Borgia* little thought of his own Sickness and Death when he had laid a design of managing all things to his own advantage after his Father's death, for man knoweth not that which shall be.

4. But there's one thing which is most likely to deliver out of the Hand of God, and that is true Religion, Piety, Holiness; Righteousness delivereth from death, and that in two respects; 1. The Piety and Prayers of others, Job 22.30. He shall deliver the island of the innocent, and it is delivered by

John 9. 4.
1 Cor 10. 22
Job 34. 29, 33

Isa. 43. 13.

Job 5. 12, 13.

Isa. 7. 6, 7.

Isa 8. 10.

Prov. 21. 32.

Eccle. 8. 7.

Prov. 10. 2.

Eccl. 9. 15.

Jer. 4. 1.
Psal. 106. 23

Jer. 15. 1.

Ezek. 14. 14.

Eccl. 9. 1, 2.
Psal 73. 10, 14
Heb. 12. 7, 8

Prov. 10. 2

Joh. 1. 2
Zech. 1. 5.

Psal. 103. 19.

the pureness of thy hands: The poor wife *man* by his wisdom delivered the city. God would have spared Sodom for ten righteous persons in it; and faith of Jerusalem, *If you can but find a man that executeth judgment and seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it.* Moses prevailed for all Israel of an Army of Six hundred thousand men, then surely this will do. No, sometimes it will not: *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people: cast them out of my sight*: Yea, tho' these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should but deliver their own souls by their righteousness. If all the holy men on Earth should interpose for one man, they cannot deliver him in some cases. Nay, 2. A man's own Holiness, Prayers, Piety, in some cases cannot deliver a choice Saint out of God's Hands, especially as to temporal deliverance; *Moses himself must not go in Canaan, nor Aaron.* Some make this to be the sense of this Text, [*Non mea quidem integritas facit; ut [hac plaga liberer]*]; It is not my own Integrity that can free me from the Stroke of God's Hand: Tho' I be not wicked, yet I am not exempted from Affliction; no, nor any good man upon Earth; *All things come alike to all*; the best men may be saddest punished: *Waters of a full cup are wrung out to them, they have been chastened every morning*: It's no sign of God's Hatred, but rather of his Love, to correct his dearest Children, yea, to strike them with death. It's true, Righteousness delivereth from death, but not from natural, but spiritual and eternal death. *Moses my servant is dead*: *Your Fathers, where are they and the Prophets? do they live for ever? we must needs dye.* It is the Royal Statute of Heaven: mens Holiness and believing prayers cannot secure them from this Stroke, as daily Experience testifies.

4th Head is, the Reasons why and whence it is that none can deliver out of the Hands of God.

1. From GOD's Sovereignty and Man's Subjection; *His Kingdom ruleth over all*, He is Supreme Lord and Law-giver to the vast Universe; celestial and terrestrial, yea, infernal

nal Creatures are under his command and controul; God put the greatest Monarch on Earth seven years Apprentice to the Beasts of the Earth, to learn this great Lesson of the Almighty's Sovereignty, *Dan. 4. 35. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: None can say unto him, what doest thou?* Things must be as God orders them.

2. From GOD's power and Man's weakness. God is the Almighty; this is his essential Property, whereby he can do all things; He created this World, hangerh the Earth upon nothing, and will burn it at the last day; he *upholds all things with the Word of his power*, and can dissolve all in an instant; and *Who is able to stand before him? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket: yea, all nations before him are as nothing, yea, less than nothing, and vanity*; Who can resist him?

3. From the Holiness of GOD and Sin of Man. God is glorious in Holiness, *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*. Never could any of the Sons of Men challenge him for an irregular act from the beginning of the World to this day; all that have known God, have vindicated him, and condemned themselves; *God is righteous*, but Man is punished for his Sins. As Sinners cannot rescue out of God's Hands, so, if they judge aright, they would not deliver themselves, but say as *David, I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*.

4. From the Wisdom of GOD, and Man's Foolishness. Alas, what would Man do with himself, if he were able to rescue himself out of God's Hands? Cannot God dispose of him better than he can do of himself? Is not *his understanding infinite*? Cannot God extract a medicinal Cup out of Poison, and make the worst things work for the greatest good to his Children? God is good to all, abundant in Goodness and Truth, and *He doth good to them that be good*; yea, he doth good by the most unlikely means, he chastens his, that he may *humble them, prove them, to do them good in*

Ce. 7. 3

Heb. 11. 3

Ira. 40. 15, 16

Psal. 145 17

Jer. 12. 1
Dan. 9 7
Lam. 3-39

Psal. 119 7

Psal. 147. 5
Rom. 8. 28

Psal. 125. 4
Deut. 8. 2, 16

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the later end. It were but madness then for a foolish man to desire a deliverance out of the hands of such a God, whose Works are wrought in number, weight, and measure, and disposeth all things to the best.

Use I. Of Doctrine to inform us,

1. That there is a God against Atheists, who say in their hearts, *there is no God*; yea, some say it with their Tongues, and alas, too too many say it in their Lives. It's a proud Pharaoh that saith, *who is the Lord? I know not the Lord, that I should let Israel go, I will not let Israel go*; but God will make him know his Power and Justice before he hath done with him; yea, the stoutest Devils in Hell feel his Hand, and cannot but believe there is a God, for none can deliver them out of his Hand: There's no Atheists in Hell, whatever there may be on Earth.

2. That God alone is absolute Sovereign over the whole Universe, he alone rules the World, he hath a Chain that binds Men and Devils; Men may contradict his commanding Will, none can contradict his disposing and punishing Will; *who would not fear thee, O King of Nations!* God is absolute Lord, all Creatures are his Subjects; God works immediately or mediately, and when he useth means, it is not [*propter defectum suae Virtutis*] sed *propter abundantiam suae bonitatis*] for want of power in him, but his Goodness to us, to communicate Dignity to the Creatures in their instrumentality; *for there's no restraint to the Lord, to save by many or by few*, by any or by no Instruments at all.

3. That it's wonderful Condescension that the great God will concern himself about sorry Man, *who humbleth himself to behold things in Heaven, and in the Earth. what is man, that thou shouldst magnifie him, and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him?* Wherein? in visiting and trying him. It's an act of God's care and faithfulness, when God will take the pains to whip us rather than forsake us; we are beholden to him for a Rod of Love, much more for deliverance out of Affliction, and advancing us by his right hand. This makes Da-

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did twice break out into this exclamation, *What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and takest knowledge of him?*

4. Adore we the infinite Grace of God and Christ in the blessed Gospel contrivance; Man had sold himself to Sin, Satan, but Jesus Christ came to deliver such forlorn Captives by price and by power, by the price of his Blood and the power of his Spirit; thus *Jesus delivers souls from the wrath to come*; he is mighty to save; read *Isa. 50. 1. 9. 53. to 63. 1, 2. He leads captivity captive*, in his Ascension, yea, in his lowest state of Humiliation; even on the cross he spoiled principalities and powers, and makes a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it, *Col. 2. 15*. All the Devils in Hell cannot keep a poor Child of Electing Love, whom God will set at liberty; and none can deliver out of God's hands but Christ: Oh, admire the Love of God in this Redeeming Love, which brings along with it temporal Blessings and Deliverance; *for this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land*, *Micah 5. 5, 6, 7*.

2d Use is, of Conviction, in respect, 1. of Publick, 2. Personal Cases.

1. As to Publick Affairs, that refer to Church and State: If God deliver us over into the hands of our Enemies, tho' they be but wounded Men, they shall prevail: if Men refuse to drink of this Cup, the Lord of Hosts saith, *Ye shall certainly drink*. It's not valiant Armies, numerous Forces, or high Fortifications that can secure us from Inundations of Divine Wrath: God puts a People to shame and silence for their Sin: we may please our selves with Power and Policy, they are insignificant things against Divine Vengeance. There is a season when a Nations Iniquity is full, then they must be destroy'd, and none can deliver: *When the Ephraim is full, the talent of Lead is clapt on its mouth*, and the wings carry it into its proper place of irrevocable Destruction. Alas, Iniquity abounds, Love decays, there's few Intercessors, much Confidence in an Arm of Flesh, great Ingratitude under former Deliverances; God may justly say, *I will deliver you no more*: we may be very jealous.

1 Thes. 1. 10.
Psal. 68. 8.
Eph. 4. 8.

Jer. 25. 28.

Jer. 8. 14.

Gen. 15. 16.
Zech. 5. 6, 11.

Josh. 10. 13.

2. As

Pfal. 50. 23.
Hcb. 10. 31.

2. As to particular Souls; let graceless Sinners tremble. O consider, poor Sinner, that forgettest God, loſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver; it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of flaming Justice. There are these ten considerations that lock in the unconverted Sinner under Wrath.

Eph. 2. 3.

1. Adam's Sin left you Prisoners in the Hand of Justice. By Nature you are children of wrath, 2. Every Act of Sin sinks you deeper, binds you faster in this low Dungeon; The wages of sin is death. 3, Satan is God's Jaylor, dragging you to Sin, and executing the Sentence of Death at last. 4. The righteous Law of God confirms the Sentence and Execution; we are shut up and kept prisoners under the law. 5, Hell is the Goal where Sinners are kept as tormented Prisoners till they have paid the utmost Farthing. 6. Death opens the Door to Sinners admission into that woful state, and shuts the Door of Hope. 7. Souls in that state are together with Devils reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day. 8. Sinners may be cast into this miserable Dungeon unawares, and die with a lye in their right hand. 9. None but Christ can rescue Sinners out of the hands of Justice, and

Rom 6. 23.
2 Tim. 2. 26
Hcb. 2. 14, 15

Gal. 3. 22, 23

Mat. 5. 25, 26
Mat. 25. 10.

Jude 6.

Isa. 44. 20.

Col. 1. 13.
Tit. 2. 14.

Luke 16. 26

Isa. 33. 14.

Acts 26. 18

translate us into glorious liberty. 10. None are redeemed by Christ, but such as are sanctified and purified to himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Oh then, if all this be true, what will become of poor, graceless, Christless Sinners? Heaven is shut upon you, Hell is gaping for you, and you are once damned, for ever damned, for there's a great gulf fixed, and there's no escaping out of that infernal Lake: O the sinners in Zion were afraid, that fearfulnes would surprize the hypocrites, which may prevent their falling into this devouring fire, these everlasting burnings. Lord, open sinners Eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and eternal inheritance.

3. Life is, of instruction & Exhortation, 1 to Sinners, 2 Saints.
1. Examin your state, O consider whose hands you are in; you are in the hands either of God or the Devil, of Mercy or Justice.

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Justice. Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. Oh that you could see your danger, and escape it; the discovery of danger is a step towards a Remedy: Poor Sinner, thou art in invisible chains, Satan holds his black hand over thine Eyes: *Awake thou that sleepest and Christ shall give thee light.*

2. Observe the Spirits motions, operations: when a light shines in the Prison, observe if whether the Angel of the Lord do not write thee on the side, and raise thee up; oh, follow him, and thy chains will fall off: Who can tell, but if thou own the next gracious motion, but it may set thee a step nearer God? Oh, quench not the spirit, comply with divine calls, put your hand into God's hand, and he will lead you towards himself.

3. Renounce all Sin: *The throne of iniquity hath no fellowship with God; wash you, make you clean, put away your doings out of his sight.* When come near to God, and you shall be familiar with him, and be secured in the hollow of his hand: shall a soul sin in God's hand? He endeavours to cut down the Bough whereon he stands; you cannot serve two Masters.

4. Give up your selves to the Lord, yield your selves to the Lord, first your souls, then your bodies, as Instruments of Righteousness: you cannot expect that God should take you into his hands, till you have put your selves into his hands. *David practiseth it, in thy hands I commend my spirit; Peter requires it, Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him, in well doing, as to a faithful Creator.*

II. A word or two to God's Children, 1st, such as are under God's Hand; 2^{dly}, or delivered.

1st, If you be under God's Hand of Affliction, and see not how you can be delivered,

1. Do not despond, say not as *David, I shall one day perish, put on patience*, let it have its perfect work, look through the thick Cloud; *in tenebras spero lucem.*

2. Own God's Hand, lay it not on Instruments: so did *Job*, the Lord hath given and taken away; justify God in all; it is fit it should be so.

3. Desire rather God's Hand may be sanctified than removed: say more to be fitted for deliverance than released from the trouble; precipitate not your Mercies.

4. Get faster hold of God by Faith and Prayer; say as *Job, Thou hast kill me, yet I will trust in him; still own him as a Father, and He will own you as a Child: Glorify God in the fire.*

2^{dly}, To you that are delivered, I might add;

1. Give God the Praise of your deliverance; so did *David, Ps. 30.*

2. 12. return back to give thanks

2 Kin. 6. 20

2 Cor. 4.

Eph. 5. 14

Acts 12. 7, 8

1 Thess. 5. 19

Psal. 94. 20.

Isa. 1. 16, 18

2 Chron. 30. 3

Rom. 6. 19

Psal. 31. 5

1 Pet. 4. 19

1 Sam. 27. 1

Job 1. 21.

Job 13. 15.

Isa. 24. 16.

Psalm 18. 1. &
116. 1.

Psalm 66. 16.

Psalm 89. 31. 32.

Isaiah 49. 16.

1 Cor. x. 13.

Tim. 14. 18.

Rom. 8. 28.

2. Love God more for himself; Benefits may be inducements but God himself is the only adequate Object of your dearest Affection. David twice professed his strong intense love after Affliction.

3. Tell others what God hath done for you, in a suitable Language and Carriage; let your Lives be walking Bibles; live as Persons raised from the dead.

4. Long to be with God in Heaven; not so much to be totally freed from the Lord's Hand of Affliction, as to be in his Bosom in immediate communion.

4th Use is, of Consolation to God's Children; tho' God's Hand be heavy upon you, and none can deliver you out of it, yet, 1. He is a Father still, tho' offended; not a sin-revenging Judge; in this last case it's dreadful, in the former it's eligible. Compare 2 Sam. 24. 17 with Heb. 16. 31. His whipping, as a Father, is a Branch of the Gospel-Covenant. 2. As none can deliver you out of his correcting Hand, so none can pluck you out of his affecting Hand: Our Lord Jesus testifies this both of himself and his Father, who is greater than all, John 10. 28, 29. 3. While you are in His Hand you are in his Eye, he never looks off you, *You are graven upon the palms of his Hand, Isa. 49. 16.* God takes special care of you in his Providence. 4. If you never be delivered out of God's Hand of Affliction, dear will set you at liberty: there's two choice Cordials in 1 Cor. x. 13. 1st, *That you shall be enabled to bear your affliction;* 2dly, *That in due time you shall have a way to escape.*

To conclude then, You Children of God be animated and greatly encourag'd in your Sufferings, by God or for God; tho' they be sharp and long, and no human help can avail to rescue you, God can and will; and you may say as the three Children, Dan. 3. 17. *If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King.* Yea, the Lord will deliver you by his Hand of Mercy, out of the Hand of Justice; yea, from every evil work of sin in your souls, damping Sin, and sinful Contrivances of Men, and will preserve you unto his heavenly Kingdom. Study the Promises, reflect on Experiences, live by Faith, be much in Prayer, sanctify God's Name, and learn Obedience by what you suffer under God's Hand, and you will find all things working for you good, tho' you can't discern it at present. Happy Souls! who trust in God, and live by Faith in evil times; for the Distich of honest Men is verified:

*Est Deus in Caelo, qui provius omnia curat,
Credentes usquam deseruisse potest:*

There is a God in Heaven, who'll not leave
Such Souls on Earth as to him ever cleave.

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